Comments to EPA regarding TMDL—

We are responsible for a small public wastewater treatment system that is just eight (8) years old and operates in a rural area. This system was build with state-of-the art design standards and we have always met our permit requirements. Since the system services a community of low to moderate income households (about 200 families) the changes you are proposing would quickly bankrupt us. That would cause those 200 households to revert back to the antiquated on-lot septic systems that were causing ground water contamination in the first place.

I question why the rush for such major changes to the standards and why the Public Comment Period is only 45 days. I believe this is totally inadequate and inappropriate. On September 24, 2010 EPA made available the draft Chesapeake Bay TMDL. The body of the report is 365 pages in length with 23 appendices totaling 262 pages that include seven tables with a total of approximately 22,000 rows of data and information in those tables. Three of these tables list cap loads for all point sources, significant and insignificant. There are 4,390 insignificant point sources listed in these tables that are unlikely aware of their inclusion and their need to review and comment on the TMDL. Forty-five days is not adequate to ensure that contact is made with appropriate representatives of these dischargers.

We will not be able to secure grant funding due to the reality of the economic situation that exists for all in the Bay watershed and beyond, the implementation of the actions needed to restore the Chesapeake Bay will not occur unless there is sufficient funding by the federal and state governments. Federal and state funding ultimately comes from the folks and that is not an option.

Just because EPA has placed severely low nitrogen and phosphorus limits for point sources into the model and the model results show that Pennsylvania's allocations for nutrients can be met, does not provide "Reasonable Assurance" that this approach will be successful.

Given that 48 percent of the nitrogen load in streams in the Bay watershed is transported through ground water and that this information is not included in the Chesapeake Bay Model, how can the current Model have sufficient accuracy?

The accuracy of the Chesapeake Bay model should be in question because the model does not accurately account for ground water as a source of nitrates. The United States Geological Service (USGS) conducted a multi-year study in the Chesapeake watershed of nitrate in ground water. The 2002 report (USGS Fact Sheet FS-091-03) states:

> "An average of 48 percent of the nitrogen load in streams in the Bay watershed was transported through ground water, with a range of 17 to 80 percent in different streams."

The study also reports that due to lag time, the median age of this groundwater is 10 years with 25 percent of the samples having an age of 7 years or less and 75 percent of the samples having an age of up to 13 years.

I believe that the need for the proposed regulations are not properly documented and are not in the best interest of the citizens of this region.